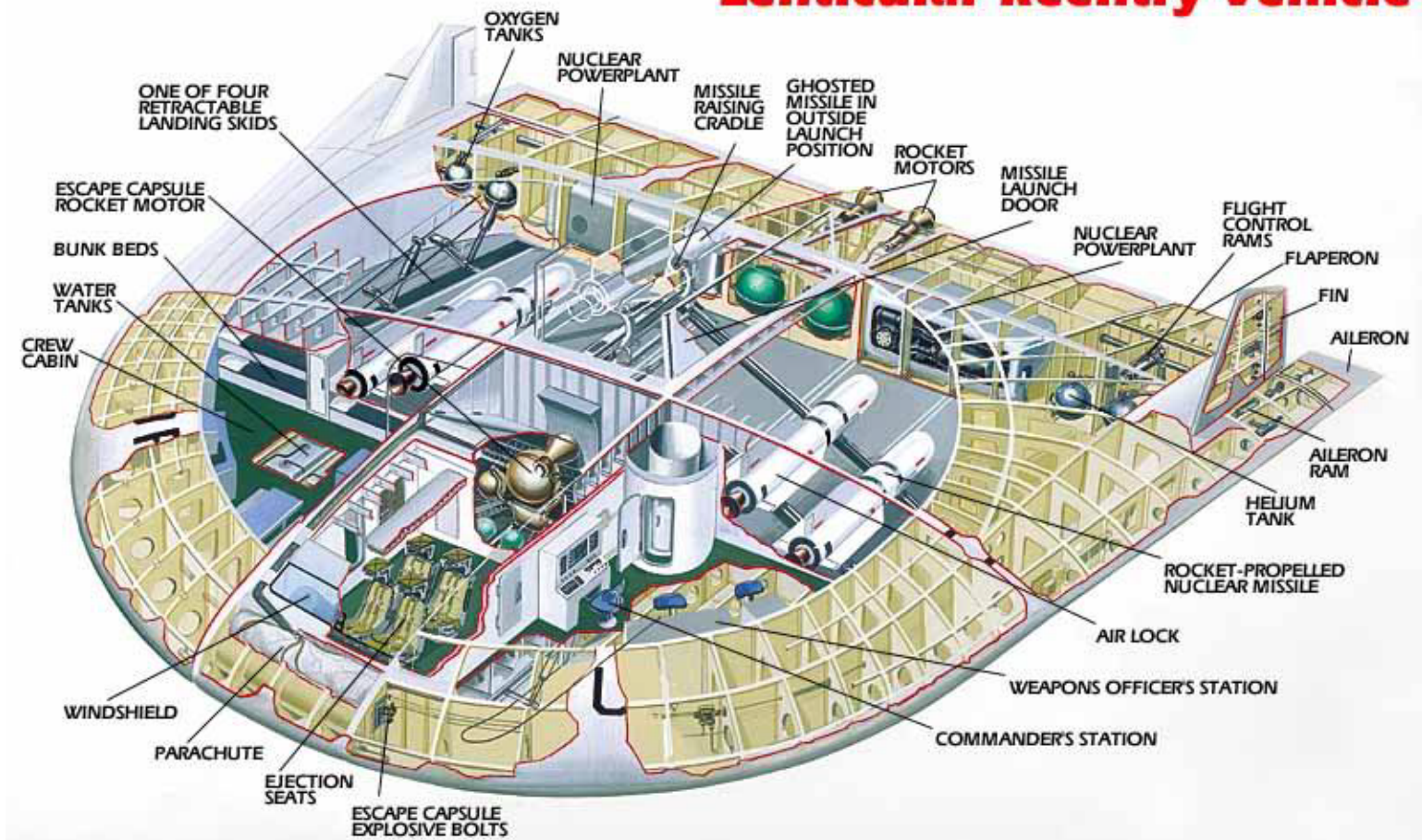
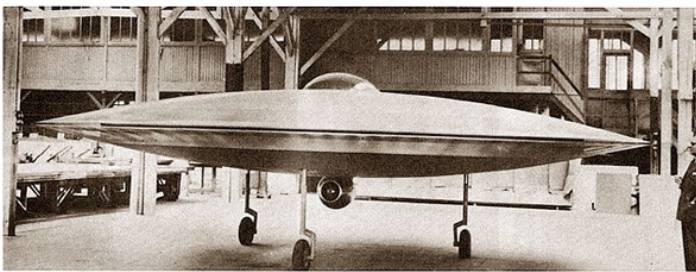
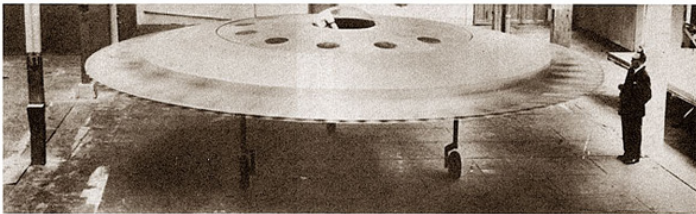


The 1960s lenticular reentry vehicle, or LRV. Declassified in the year 2000.

Lenticular Reentry Vehicle



U.S. government documents declassified in 2000 reveal that back in the '60s, the U.S. military was working on a way to deliver nuclear missiles from orbit with a manned flying saucer called the lenticular reentry vehicle, or LRV. Launched on top of a conventional rocket, the LRV could spend six weeks in orbit while supporting a crew of four, relying on its saucer shape to dissipate heat when returning to Earth and acting as a wing to glide to a landing.



Designed by René Couzinet, this engineless model of the French aerodyne has a diameter of almost 27 feet. It will be powered by three 135-horsepower engines and the turbojet reactor visible on the underside in the lower view. Philadelphia Inquirer, July 5, 1955. (World Wide Photo)



René Couzinet designed this flying saucer with two counter-rotating discs that spun around the perimeter of the craft. Each disc had 50 airfoil vanes to provide lift and control. The pilot sat under the glass bubble in the middle, and six turbojet engines embedded in the body provided the lifting power while another engine underneath was for forward thrust.